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## FEATURES

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Building a fountain-filled urban waterscape during the pandemic had its challenges, but the finished product made a huge splash, according to **Russell Owen**, the 2020 winner of the Fountains and Formal Features category in POND Trade's Water Artisans of the Year contest.

### 13 Flying Dogs

Ever heard of "dock diving" or "dog jumping?" **Landon Malave** hadn't either, until his neighbor asked him to build a pond for hosting local canine jumping competitions. Talk about some talented wet dogs!

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If you've had enough of the same old plants around the yard and water garden, **Becky Turpin** has a few ideas. Check out her wide selection of unique, creative planting options that can help restore the garden's wow factor.

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There are many types of algae treatments, and most of them have been featured in this magazine. **Antonio Trigliani** unveils a relatively new, chemical-free technology that uses ultrasonic waves to eradicate pesky algae blooms.

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Take a ride with **Cole Frisby** and his children as they explore the world of benefits an aquatic ecosystem can bring to water lovers of all ages. From playing in the mud to learning about ecological processes, your backyard never had so much to offer.

### 40 Alley-Oop!

One year after a team of Certified Aquascape Contractors converged on Atlanta to build a massive pond at NBA legend Shaquille O'Neal's home over a four-day period, **John Magyar** provides a maintenance update on this one-of-a-kind water feature built for a Superman.



### 45 Koi Pickers LANGUAGE OF KOI

When you're shopping for koi, it's essential to know the various types and varieties you are looking for before you write the check. **Francesco Gonnella** shares his knowledge and expertise to provide insight into what to look for when you're in the market for nature's swimming jewels.

### 50 Walk on Water FLASHBACK ARTICLE

**Kent Wallace** profiled the construction of "floating steps" for formal ponds in a very popular Best Pond Practices segment in POND Trade about four years ago. So, thanks to popular demand, we're formally flashing back to the 2017 article.

### 54 "Puddle Jumping" in KC

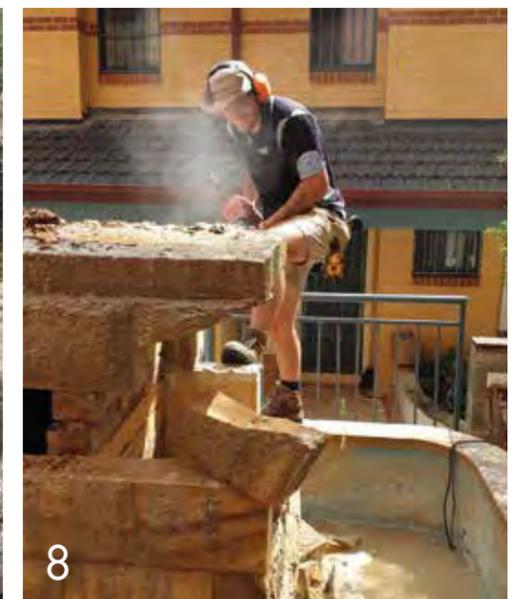
This year, the Greater Kansas City Water Garden Society changed its pond tour format to integrate more social distancing and allow more enthusiasts (like our very own **Lora Lee Gelles**) to attend safely. Check out her photos!

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# Upcoming Events

2021

**September 24 - 26**  
**Midwest ZNA Koi Show & Pond Expo**  
 Timberwinds Nursery  
 Ellisville, Missouri

**October 13 - 14**  
**Your Pond Farm**  
**Virtual Trade Show**  
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**October 20 - 22**  
**GIE+Expo / Hardscape North America**  
 Kentucky Exposition Center  
 Louisville, Kentucky  
 www.gie-expo.com  
 www.hardscapena.com

**October 21 - 23**  
**National Hardware Show**  
 Las Vegas Convention Center  
 Las Vegas, Nevada  
 www.nationalhardwareshow.com

2022

**February 16 - 18 (tentative)**  
**Water Garden Expo**  
 Heart of Oklahoma Expo Center  
 Shawnee, Oklahoma  
 www.wgexpo.com

**March 11 - 13**  
**Central Florida Koi and Goldfish Show**  
 Avanti Palms Resort  
 Orlando, Florida  
 www.cfks.org

Are you attending an event that you think others should know about? Are you hosting an event and want more people to come? Send event info to [llgelles@pondtrademag.com](mailto:llgelles@pondtrademag.com).



## Moving? Let Us Know

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# Publisher's Perspective

## Good Times!

I don't know about you, but I've been having a really good summer. It's the first time since the pandemic that I've done some business travel. I popped that mask on, jumped on a plane and flew to Kansas City to visit Powell Gardens with International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society (IWGS) members Susan Davis, Deb Spencer and Justin Titus. The next day I attended the Greater Kansas City Water Garden Society's "Puddle Jumping" Pond Tour (see pg. 54). A few days later, I met up with John Magyar in Atlanta for a photo shoot to accompany his article about maintaining Shaquille O'Neal's pond a year after the build (see pg. 40). John also took me around to see some of his other projects. It was a whirlwind



tour of fun, but it felt so good to be out and about again among my colleagues in this wonderful industry!

Speaking of artisans and their projects, you might have noticed that our sixth annual Water Artisans of the Year contest is open for your entries once again. This year's five categories are: Best Pondless, Best Under \$15k, Most Naturalistic, Formal Ponds and Fountains and, new this year, Rock Artisans! If you design or build features, it's time to start sorting through your photos and project specifications from this past pond season and prepare your best work for early submission. The holidays will be upon us before you know it!

As autumn knocks on the door, we've got a packed issue full of new content for your reading pleasure. We regularly talk about the effects of ponds on us adults, but we're stepping outside the box and taking a look at ponds for children (pg. 34) and ponds for hosting dog-jumping competitions (pg. 13). Clearly, man, woman, child and dog can each reap their own benefits from the pond life. (As for cats? The verdict is still out.)

As a plant lover, I also particularly enjoyed Becky Turpin's article about planting creatively in and around the pond (pg. 18). Take a gander at her collection of clever shrubs, trees and greenery that you can integrate into the blank canvas that surrounds the pond.

Happy PONDering!

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# Dancing in the Air

Fountains elevate water gardens to new heights

by **Russell Owen,**  
Anything Wet

The word “fountain” can mean many things to different people. Of course, the first image that springs to mind is a stylish water feature. Taking a moment to understand the history of fountains and their ongoing role in society allows us to effectively design a modern fountain that will remain relevant for years to come.

As a water feature, a fountain can be grand, or it can be delicate. It can be a deluxe, dominating spectacle, like the wow-factor water features in Las Vegas (e.g., the Fountains of Bellagio). Alternatively, a fountain can be seen as the calming element of a botanical outdoor space to encourage mindfulness, complementing a Japanese Zen Garden, for example, with a koi fishpond and trickling decorative water feature.

Today, a fountain can be described as a piece of architecture that allows water to travel from a source to a basin, a bowl or directly into the air either for drinking purposes or a decorative effect. There are just so many beautiful variations of fountains that we couldn't possibly cover them all! An excellent place to

start understanding more about fountains and their adaptability is to explore their fascinating history.

## An Abridged History Lesson

The world's first examples of fountains can be found in ancient Mesopotamia around 5,000 years ago (3000 B.C.). Making use of a natural spring, water poured from the source into a series of man-made basins designed for drinking water and washing. Examples of ancient fountains can also be found in Greek and Roman archaeological remains, with bronze and stone masks of animals and heroes.

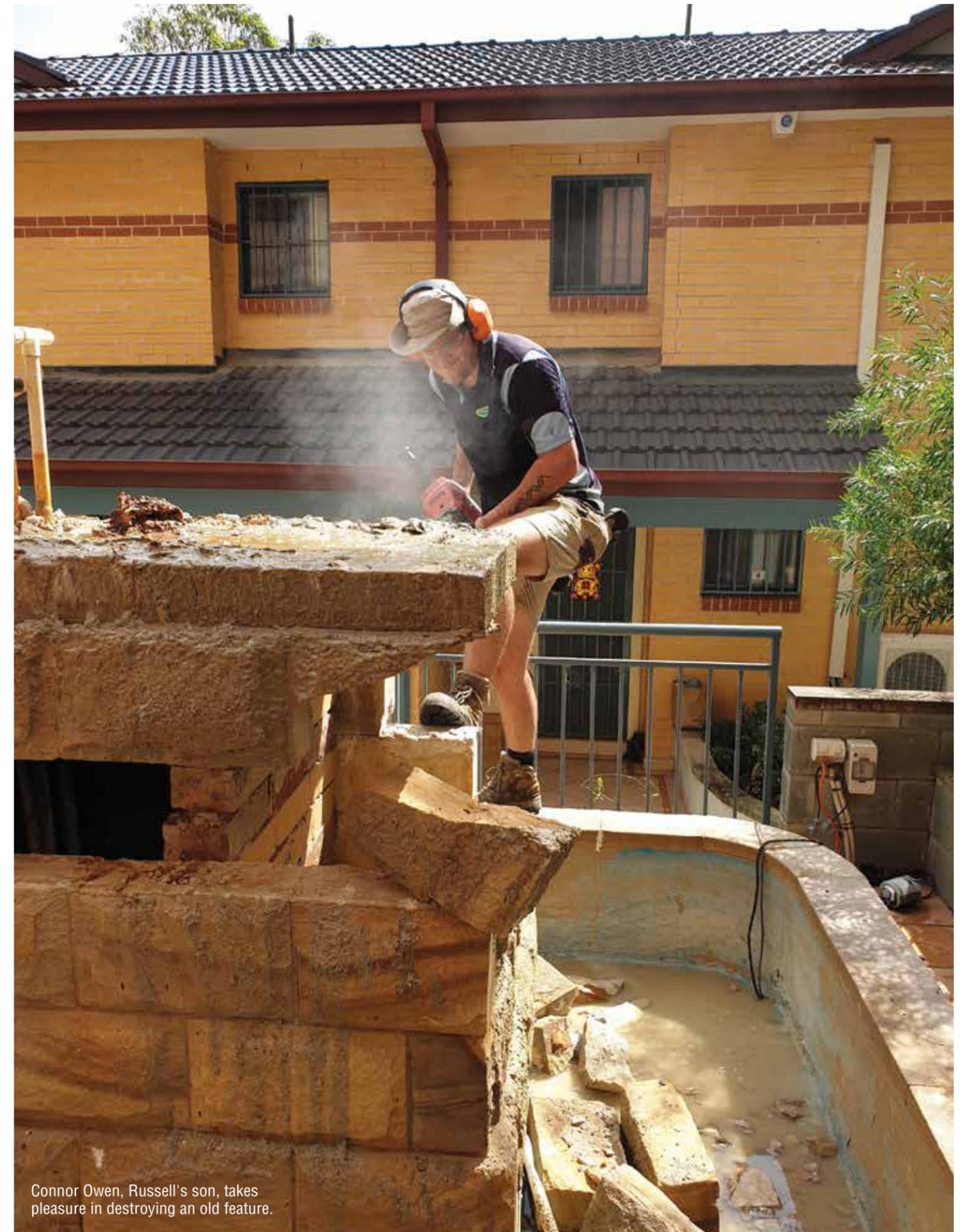
There's no doubt that water has played an essential role in human history, but fountain technology is of extremely high value, as it allows the use of aquatic technology to shape and play with water to suit

our needs. Fountain builders have been celebrated throughout history.

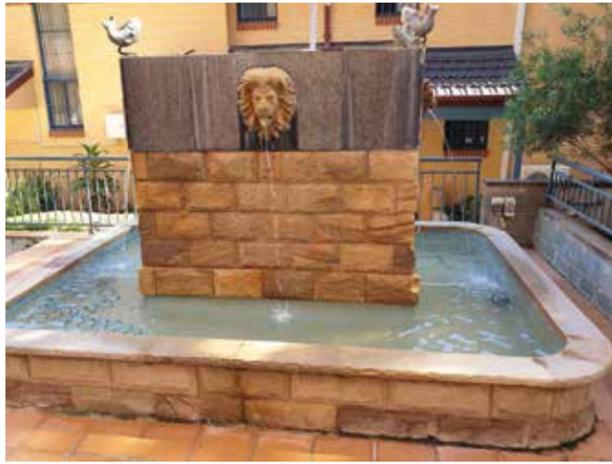
In the mid to late 16th century, fountains were considered a stop on the path to illumination, forging a new career known as hydromechanics, or *fontanini* in Italy. These fountain builders were employed to create special effects using a combination of water and gravity; however, they were also entrusted with the vital task of supplying clean drinking water to towns and cities.



Finally! COVID-19 lockdown relief! Fountains provide hours and hours of entertainment, relaxation and conversation.



Connor Owen, Russell's son, takes pleasure in destroying an old feature.



**This is one of the first fountainscapes in Australia, to our knowledge. The build was quite problematic, as it was in a courtyard inside a large apartment block in the city.**

### Modern Fountains

The pond industry has grown exponentially since I started Anything Wet about 17 years ago. People want tranquil features to soothe the soul and recharge the batteries of life. We offer our clients a holistic approach, allowing them to feel closer to nature while working with their vision and the practicalities of construction.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Anything Wet was asked to build a fountainscape in Ashfield, Sydney (Australia). The scope was to remove the old feature and create a magical fountainscape using bowls and urns. These types of urn and bowl water features are very popular. They give you all the sights and sounds of a water feature, but with minimal up-front cost and maintenance. Urn and bowl water features are super easy to install and don't require any mechanical knowledge or special tools.

This is one of the first fountainscapes in Australia, to our knowledge. The build was quite problematic, as it was in a courtyard inside a large apartment block in the city. The logistics of having materials delivered and the use of machinery made for an interesting challenge, requiring some creative problem solving from our team.

### Building Specs

After demolishing the old

feature, the pond basin was lined using EPDM Firestone rubber liner.

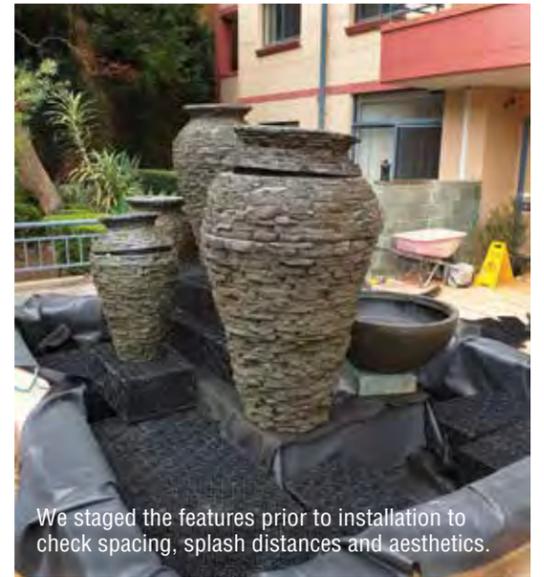
We then created a false floor using AquaBlox, which allowed us to build the water features up on a stable surface and still have a large volume of water available. We installed a high-quality controllable-speed pump, which allows the features to be turned down on windy days. A non-return check valve was also added to create an easy-to-use, professional setup. We installed five stacked slate urn water features and two spillway bowls at different heights and facing different directions to make the feature enjoyable from any angle.

Due to the number of urns and bowls installed, we had to be creative with the plumbing to maximize each feature and make it as efficient as possible. We created a custom plumbing manifold to feed the water into each feature, with a valve to adjust each one individually. The pump is located within a vault to make it easy to access for servicing. We like to provide easy care options on our builds to make the feature more enjoyable; no one wants to spend hours maintaining when you could just be enjoying it!

As such, we also installed an auto-fill, top-up unit to provide peace of mind and minimize any damage to the equipment. We used natural materials to make the fountainscape more aestheti-



Preparation is the key to success.



We staged the features prior to installation to check spacing, splash distances and aesthetics.

cally pleasing and to look more natural. Pebbles and rocks were used to cover any exposed AquaBlox and make the fountains blend in.

The use of plants, both water and terrestrial, softens the feature and makes it sit more naturally in its environment. Lights were installed to make the fountainscape come to life after dark and provide an area to be enjoyed for all hours

of the day. Because we were working in an apartment block during lockdown, we had many residents actively engaged in the building process and eagerly awaiting the project's completion.

### Fountain of Truth

To say the residents were ecstatic with the fountainscape would be an understatement! Multiple residents

approached our team and expressed how happy they were with the building's newest amenity.

Clearly, these types of urn and bowl water features are very popular. They give you all the sights and sounds of a water feature, but with minimal up-front cost and maintenance. Urn and bowl water features are super easy to install and don't require any mechan-



The project (top and middle) is shown before our new installation. All the materials for this job (the demolition and construction) had to be carried by hand through marble-tiled hallways. Trying to plumb an 80-mm manifold (bottom) and seven 40-mm lines into only 1 square meter of space isn't as easy as you might think!



Three days of hard but rewarding work culminated in this work of art.

# In the Clear



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ical knowledge or special tools.

We at Anything Wet always complete our work to the highest standard possible. Client feedback means everything to us. We love leaving a job knowing we have made people happy. During times of high stress, like many of us have felt during the global pandemic, water can promote calmness and focus.

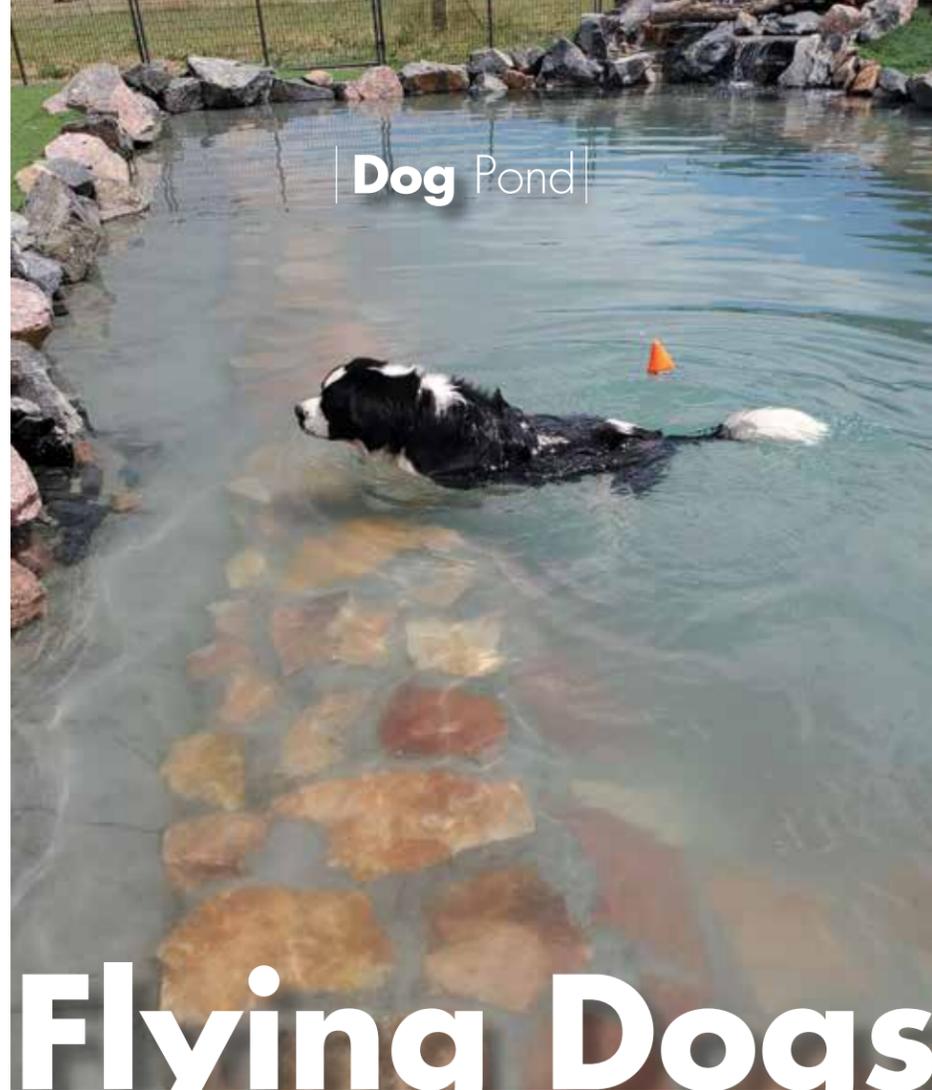
Wallace J. Nichols talks about a state of Blue Mind, describing it as “the calm, peacefulness and a general sense of happiness and satisfaction with life within the moment.” He suggests that being close to and mindful of bodies of water help you gain the benefits of the Blue Mind. Ponds, water features, pondless waterfalls and fountains all provide a space for our brains to experience empathy, positive emotions and self-awareness — the building blocks of happiness! ☺

### About the Author

**Russell Owen** started Anything Wet in August 2004 after seeing a hole in the landscape industry for ponds and water features. Anything Wet is an Australian pond company servicing



Sydney, Newcastle, the Central Coast of Australia and their surroundings. Russell has always had a passion for water and keeping a variety of fish, both fresh and saltwater. In December 2019, Russell became a Master Certified Aquascape Contractor (CAC) after more than a decade in the industry. As a member of Aquascape Australia's mentoring program, he is proud to assist new and beginning CACs in creating natural, ecofriendly ponds and water features. In 2020, Russell won the Fountains and Formal Features category in POND Trade's Water Artisan of the Year contest.



# Flying Dogs

A special pond to host "dock diving"

by **Landon Malave**,  
LCM Landscape

**A** regulation dog-jumping pond — what even is that? I certainly knew nothing about until I happened upon this opportunity by chance. My neighbor who sold us our German Shepherd posted on social media that she had ordered an above-ground pool so that she could offer dog jumping to her boarding clients and possibly host dog-jumping competitions.

When I saw the post, my mind immediately wandered back to my childhood and growing up with an above-ground pool, which taught me a couple things. First of all, the first time the dog touches that liner, it's all going to be over. (I learned the hard way.) Secondly, the client likely was going to have to replace the liner every

couple of years for one reason or another. So, I sent her a message to paint a picture of how I might go about making something work best for her.

I was also very curious, so I looked up a few videos and photos of “dog jumping” (also known as dock diving). Basically, dogs run down a long runway and dock before jumping into a pool. The jumping distance is then measured and ranked. Sometimes the dog is thrown a toy; sometimes they reach for a toy that is suspended over the dock. Needless to say, this was something I never dreamed I would one day help create.

### A Paw-sible Pond?

After going over my concerns, we started to talk about building a pond instead of a pool. She wanted to make sure that it would be regulation so that she could hold events, which meant the



It was difficult to tie in natural elements with the pond being square, but we had fun utilizing leftover materials from other jobs to help minimize cost. We had to make sure it met all the regulations and specifications for dog jumping in order to be totally functional for the client.



Even though the purpose of the pond was to have fun and hold dog-jumping competitions, we had to add our own little touches to give it a more natural feel, including the addition of a nice waterfall in the corner to act as a backdrop.

overall dimensions of the pond needed to be 21 by 45 by 4 feet deep. This was going to be a large pond!

She could avoid having to build a large dock above ground as well, since we could lower the pond. I told her that normally when we build a pond, we put concrete over all the liners. This would be ideal for this application, since it would eliminate any concern of dogs puncturing the liner.

She started asking me about costs, so we dug into that side of it. There was a lot to consider; it would need to keep very well circulated,

clean and algae-free, because if she were going to utilize this for her boarding customers or dog competitions, it would need to be in pristine shape. I knew this would be a big challenge, knowing that these dogs constantly would be bringing tons of debris and hair into the pond. I started relaying these issues to her and came up with a rather good game plan.

### Construction & Filtration

Since she was my neighbor and I wanted to help her

out, I told her I would use existing materials that I had recycled from other jobs. I would concrete everything in so that there was no way to puncture the liner. The idea was that we could use a patchwork of boulders large and small with flagstone to cover the pond area. We had to make sure we made a ramp along the dock so that the dogs could walk back out of the pond once they had taken the plunge. We then agreed that we needed to put artificial turf around the outside of the pond to try and keep as much debris out as possible.

We would need enough filtration and water movement to make this all work properly. I decided that I would make a small waterfall in the corner to add to the aesthetics of the pond. I realized that as we pumped the water out, it needed to go back in — and might as well look nice doing so. We had to go through a few trials to see what would work best for the filtration and flow.

Because there would be animals and possibly humans swimming in the pond, I started with two Pentair external pumps and OASE



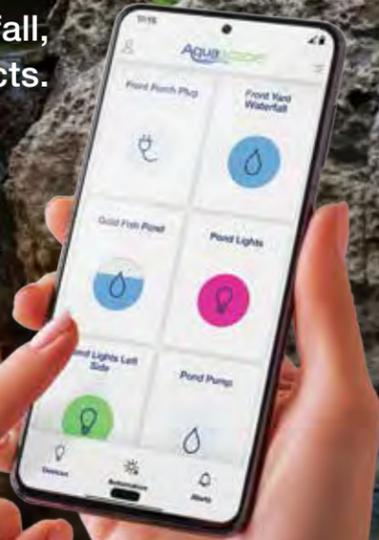
It amazed us that some dogs could jump upward of 25 feet off the dock! Check out this one in action!

**Since she was my neighbor and I wanted to help her out, I told her I would use existing materials that I had recycled from other jobs. I would concrete everything in so that there was no way to puncture the liner.**



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At 21 by 45 feet, this large pond provides dogs with plenty of room to showcase their best leap.

filtration to filter enough water to make this a success. We had to make a few tweaks along the way, but eventually we were able to get good flow and water movement.

With some careful planning and excellent execution, we were able to successfully build this large dog-jumping pond, and it was a hit! My neighbor

does have to clean the filters and pumps regularly to maintain high water quality.

It has not yet been used for competition, but we are hopeful to see events happening here in the future. This was a first for us, and we hope it will lead to many more opportunities to build innovative and unique ponds in the future. ☺

## About the Author

**Landon Malave** is the owner of LCM Landscape & Design LLC, which operates out of Elbert, Colorado. He services all along the Front Range and travels across neighboring states to build waterfalls. He grew up on a farm in Eastern Colorado, earning his associate's degree in horticulture and a certificate in landscape design from Front Range Community College. He worked as a project manager and designer at a landscape company for two years before deciding to start LCM Landscape & Design in 2012. In 2014, he met his mentor, Rick Pursell, who shared his knowledge from 50 years of experience building waterfalls all over the world. Landon lives on a tree farm with his wife and three children.



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# Blazing New Trails

**Creative planting  
options around the pond**

**by Becky Turpin,**  
Turpin Landscape Design/Build

**N**ew water features are exciting and always enhance a property — but the gardens that accompany them are often the real show-stoppers that can put the entire scene over the top!

## Let the Fun Begin!

Start with the consideration of vertical elements. Would a deciduous tree (or several of them) be desirable to provide shade, shelter and nesting sites for birds, while offering larger displays of seasonal color? Or are you looking for more diversified plant forms in your garden collection that are intended for the space surrounding the pond to provide an opportunity for landscape lighting?

As you ponder your plant selection, remember to observe the amount of sunlight and consider potential challenges, such as extreme soil conditions, wildlife and other constraints created by the size of the space. Secondly, choosing an assortment of evergreen plant material to anchor the garden throughout the year is key for enjoyment of winter garden scenes. The seasonal color changes are an added bonus, providing more layers of interest throughout the year.

When I mention the term "evergreen" to new clients, usually while discussing a foundation planting or creatively planting around a pond, it is often misinterpreted. Some people visualize a Christmas Tree, while others see the old-fashioned yew and junipers that were over-pruned for decades. Neither of these is what I am referring to.

In this conversation, there are two types

Opposite page: Planting creatively around the pond elevates the aquatic plants within the pond by providing a backdrop that keeps the focus inward on the pond. When done correctly, ponds and their surroundings look great day or night and throughout the seasons.



Consider various vantage points (above and below) to capture a view and create a scene. Use the backdrop as your canvas to develop the garden. Add plants where you like, but remember to always maintain the view of the waterfalls.

of evergreens: conifers and broad-leaf shrubs. Both are available in a wide array of sizes, colors, textures and growth habits, with a tolerance of many different growing conditions. Deciduous plants with exfoliating or colorful bark and those that bear fruit can also be beneficial during the winter months in cooler climates.

### Expand Your Horizons

My fellow plant addicts often tell me that they keep finding great new plants but have nowhere to put them. There is always room for improvement for an avid gardener. One of my favorite things about the enjoyment of gardening is discovering new plants. Options to expand beds, trade plants, offer charitable contributions or do something nice for someone else may help ease the angst of plant removal, if that is a concern for you.

Frequently with existing trees,

shrubby and perennials, a bit of tweaking may be necessary to allow access for new plant installation. Other times, total removal may be neces-



sary for the greater good of achieving long-term goals. When footprint space is required for the installation of new desirable plant material, something must go. If this is painful, weigh sacrifice vs. reward. In my opinion, if the plant in question is not highly valuable or sentimental, it is usually more cost effective in the long run to start fresh and enjoy getting something new — probably with improved vigor, new attributes or size appropriateness.

### Know What You're Getting

Looks can be very deceiving among many categories of plants, but this issue is crucial when it comes to conifers. Conifers are sometimes available for purchase in very small starter sizes that eventually will grow into large plants. Plan for more mature sizes when planting, or realize that what is an adorable little accent plant now may need to be relocated or replaced later. Rule of

thumb: the slower growing and more unusual the conifer, the more expensive it is likely to be. Get the best out of your selected plants' prominent locations in the garden, even if they are only a foot in size.

One example of a common misconception is Golden Mop threadleaf false cypress. Notably dwarf varieties of plants are smaller; however, the

**My fellow plant addicts often tell me they keep finding great new plants but have nowhere to put them. There is always room for improvement for an avid gardener.**

term dwarf may also refer to growth rate. New plants from the nursery that appear to remain low mounds of golden foliage may actually grow into haystack-shaped shrubs up to 5 feet tall, or more over time. Gold is gorgeous; use it if you like it, but realize that it may not stay in one location forever.

Conifers fascinate me, and sometimes it is fun to be weird with plant selection. Some are predictable and popular mainstays in garden centers, such as dwarf Alberta spruce and mugo pine. Others funkier and more unusual appeal to me more, like Fukuzumi pine and weeping blue atlas cedar. Various intriguing conifers are available in hues of green, blue, yellow and almost white, which mix well in the garden year-round and steal the show during the winter. More of my favorite conifers to mention include varieties of cedar, false cypress, fir, pine, spruce and Japanese umbrella pine. More recently, I have gained a renewed appreciation for various plum yew, arborvitae, juniper and hemlock varieties. All conifers are not created equal, so remember to read the tag for size information.

Did you know that conifers and broadleaf shrubs offer both evergreen and deciduous varieties? For example, bald cypress and redwood are



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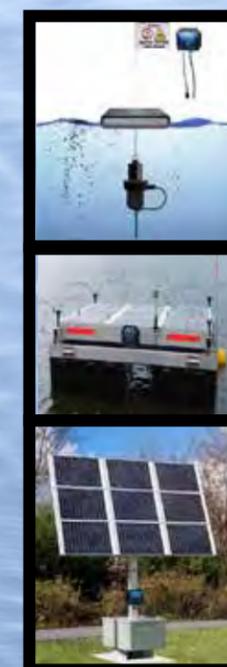
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As you ponder plant selection, remember to observe the amount of sunlight and consider potential challenges. Choosing an assortment of evergreen plant material to anchor the garden throughout the year is key for enjoyment of winter garden scenes, with a bonus of seasonal color changes to provide additional layers of interest throughout the year.

examples of deciduous conifers. Some broadleaf shrubs worth considering for unanticipated pops of evergreen color (especially during the winter months) include the obvious azalea and rhododendron, along with various boxwood, holly, false holly, laurel, leucothoe, mahonia, nandina and pieris; just

remember to consider sun and shade conditions when selecting the appropriate plant material.

Creative planting around the pond also includes colorful deciduous broadleaf shrubs such as barberry, beautyberry, buddleia, clethra, chokeberry, crape myrtle, deutzia, hibiscus,

hydrangea, rose, ninebark, potentilla, spirea, sweet shrub, viburnum, weigela and winterberry holly. These may not sound all that inspiring until you delve into newer selections that have had astonishing results in recent years, with newfound options for most gardens.

## Stay Within Scale

Choosing plants that will stay in scale with the space is another important factor not to be overlooked. This is especially crucial in smaller spaces. The last thing you want is oversized plant material that over time makes your pond look like a puddle in the landscape. Textures and combinations are also important; a good tip is to compare the fabrics and finishes of interior decorating and bring them outdoors to create your garden scene. Play with contrast or a monochromatic scheme to suit your fancy and update it as you feel necessary. An eclectic mix of plant material to creatively plant around the pond works best because, while informal, it can be highly exciting, with focal points changing daily.

Many of my favorite plants are small ornamental trees. I even expanded

the bed space around my pond just to make room for them. These include jade butterfly ginkgo, Lemon Splash variegated cherry, Waterfall Japanese maple



Steppingstones provide access across the pond — and they're fun to sit on, too!

and Little Twist cherry. Also included are special conifers such as thunderhead pine, Franky Boy arborvitae, weeping blue atlas cedar, Japanese umbrella

pine, weeping blue spruce, Hinoki false cypress and many more. The trick is to blend the colors, sizes and textures in a way that provides visual appeal from all directions of sight.

The fluff, as I call it, comes last, once the major players are in place and the endless introduction of perennials is fully considered. Perennial gardeners reap the rewards of trying new things more frequently than the gardener focusing primarily on trees and shrubs. Some perennials are tricky and others foolproof; however, not all are predictable. As the popular saying goes, when it comes to perennials, the first year they sleep, the second year they creep, and the third year they leap.

While this is true for many, it is not appropriate for all. Again, I repeat: Read the tags to have a better idea of what you are getting. Beware of invasive plants, heeding advice of self-

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sowing plants or spreading through runners, unless that is the effect you are trying to achieve. Some perennials are described as short-lived, so don't be too disappointed when they do not return.

When planting around the pond, it takes everything to another level when nooks and crannies between rocks and pathways have small creeping plants spilling from the crevices to soften the hard lines and add visual interest. These can also help with weed control and erosion. This is another great opportunity for the addition of pollinating plants to your garden, attracting beneficial bees, butterflies, dragonflies and hummingbirds to stabilize the ecosystem. So, have fun with experimentation!

If the garden surrounding your pond has pockets for potential plants but you hesitate to overcrowd things, use annual plants or container plantings. Enjoy changing colors and plant selections season to season without concern for overwhelming or overcrowding your space. Ornamental or structural elements are another option, such as a trellis, obelisk, arbor or bench. Do what feels right for you, and don't be afraid to change your mind along the way.

When possible, make the space interactive for you and your visitors to enjoy. As a grandmother of 13, I attempt to provide my grandchildren directional flow through gardens with bridges, steppingstones and pathways to designate space to run — and preferably not to trample plants. Another thought is to create seating destinations to perch, ponder and enjoy the beauty of the plantings surrounding the pond.

### Keep an Open Mind

Plants are my passion. Most categories of plants currently for sale are available in a wider range of mature sizes and colors than ever before, thanks to plant breeders and growers continuing to promote selection in

The view from indoors out (top and middle) is important, as is curb appeal from the road for this pond in the front yard. This weeping blue atlas cedar (bottom) looks interesting from both directions, with its cascading form to play off the adjacent descending waterfall. The icy blue color, wispy form and short needles provide a spectacular focal point to the garden.

the industry and improve success in our gardens. Learn more about them before you judge. In other words, refrain from generalization and quick judgement. I use the analogy of stating a dislike for a certain food, the appearance of a certain pattern or color, or classifying a smell as a detestable odor or enjoyable fragrance. It's like saying, "I hate broccoli!" Whether it's raw, steamed, roasted with garlic or smothered in cheese, your opinion may change. Azaleas are now available in shades of watermelon and grape, versus the red, white and pink of Mother's Days of years gone by, and they can be unexpectedly gorgeous, with repeat blooms throughout the season. And so it goes, just like we gardeners, plants are becoming more diverse than ever. So, don't judge a plant by its cover or previous experience. Try something new and enjoy creative planting around the pond! ☘

### About the Author

**Becky Turpin** is the senior landscape designer for Turpin Landscape Design/Build. As the mother of the company co-founders and owners Jason



and Chad Turpin, she has the responsibility of leading the landscape division and coordinating projects with their construction team. Becky

officially joined the company 16 years ago after a decade of experience at a large family-owned local garden center. Her knowledge of plants, both in the landscape and in water features, is extensive and her passion for finding unique plants makes her projects extraordinary and personalized for each setting. Her own garden features a koi pond in the front yard, complete with streams, bridges and an ever-changing landscape that combine to create a stunning, interactive garden experience. With a lifelong passion for collecting specimen plants, Becky is always looking for something new.

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Rapid growing blue-green algal blooms release toxins into the air and water, which can lead to health issues for humans, pets, livestock, wildlife and aquatic life.

Ditch the chemicals with ultrasonic algae-control technology

by **Antonio Trigiani,**  
Diversified Power International

As the world pushes forward looking for eco-friendly alternatives that preserve the environment, technology already exists that provides a safe, effective and efficient means of algae control and remediation. This article will explain how ultrasonic technology works, some of the research behind the technology and the benefits.

**What is Ultrasonic?**

Ultrasonic units are electrical units that emit specific ultrasonic soundwaves in frequency ranges utilizing low-wattage power and low-wattage amplifiers. Sealed

within a water-resistant polymer, the interior components are powered in one of three ways: 120/220-volt AC, 24-volt AC/DC, or solar power units on shore or mounted to a pontoon.

Using internationally patented technology, some units emit more than 2,000 frequencies over multiple bandwidths to create an environment that is not conducive to algae survival.

Since ultrasonic frequencies travel through the entire water column, this technology can easily be used to control blue-green algae, most filamentous algae and numerous different types of diatoms. While the impact of ultrasonic technology varies depending upon the type of algae or diatom, the end result is the same: cleaner water, reduced maintenance costs, fewer



chemicals and a more environmentally friendly and sustainable body of water.

### Algae Killers

Blue-green algae typically look like a green surface coating that you see on a pond or lake from the late morning until the early evening, disappearing when the sun goes down. Blue-green algae cause

toxins in literal self-defense. Treating blue-green algae with chemicals can cause a toxic situation in the water being treated.

In addition, chemical treatments can interfere with the food chain in bodies of water, causing undesired results, including fish kills if too much of the chemical is applied to the water. Another



The Sawyer's Pond community in Johnson City, Tennessee, enjoys a beautiful, clear pond thanks to ultrasonic algae control technology.

harmful algae blooms that can cause harm to people and even kill livestock, pets and a variety of other aquatic and non-aquatic life forms. As a defense mechanism, when attacked, blue-green algae release a variety of toxins to defend themselves, including endotoxins, neurotoxins and hepatotoxins that target the skin, central nervous system and liver, respectively.

When using chemicals to treat blue-green algae, the chemicals lyse, or break, the outer cell wall of the alga, causing them to sense that they are under attack. This causes them to release their

issue with using chemicals is that if there is any water flow, the effectiveness of chemicals may be diluted by the continuous flow of incoming untreated water. Algae can also develop a resistance to chemical treatments if the dosage is applied incorrectly or inconsistently. Ultrasonic technology has none of these potential side effects.

By using ultrasonic technology, the sound waves specifically target the gas vesicles, or air bladders, inside the blue-green algae, causing them to rupture within the cell walls while leaving the outer cell wall intact. The air that was originally inside the

The Palencia community in St. Augustine, Florida, had a blue-green algae outbreak in March 2020 (top). Pristine water was restored (second photo) by June 2020. Cumberland Harbor in St. Mary's, Georgia, had a similar problem (third photo) with blue green algae. Following ultrasonic treatments (bottom photo), the pond is back to a natural and enjoyable environment.



Ultrasonic units may come with float and 120/240 power supply, a solar pontoon with bird deterrents or a nine-panel land-based solar-panel power supply.

## Ultrasonic sound waves can effectively vibrate and scramble the inside of many different diatoms, rendering them incapable of remaining viable and living.

now ruptured gas vesicles seep through the outer cell wall, causing the alga cells to sink to the bottom of the body of water where they can decompose safely and be consumed by aquatic life and naturally occurring bacteria. The decomposition process can be aided by aeration and the introduction of beneficial bacteria.

Ultrasonic technology can also be effective in eliminating filamentous algae, which are typically the kind that you can pick up and hold in your hand. In the case of filamentous alga, there are no toxins to be concerned about, and the ultrasonic technology vibrates and breaks the outer cell wall of the alga. Once that

happens, bacteria can enter the inside of the cell and consume it, effectively killing the algae.

Diatoms are another danger that are impossible to see with the naked eye. The classic diatom has a crystal-like outer shell that can look like snowflakes and other amazing geometric designs under a microscope. In large numbers, they can cause clarity or turbidity issues in water. Ultrasonic sound waves can effectively vibrate and scramble the inside of many different diatoms, rendering them incapable of remaining viable and living. They, too, will sink to the bottom of the body of water and be consumed

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Taihu Lake, a large freshwater lake in Eastern China.

## Ultrasonic Around the World

■ **Taihu Lake, China.** Jiangping Li and colleagues studied the use of ultrasound for removing algae in differing conditions. An investigation of the changes in sample water quality indicated that the technology could efficiently remove algae by as much as 96%, suggesting that ultrasonic technology can not only provide an effective method for algae removal, but also have a significant improvement on the water quality.

■ **Europe.** Duddy H. Oyib, M.S., conducted research with carp farms in Europe in conjunction with the European Commission Water Framework Directive. Two ponds were stocked with carp, and one was equipped with a chemical-free, low-energy ultrasound unit. That pond had an average of 1.5 mg bound and free chlorophyll per cubic meter, while the untreated pond registered 10.6 mg per cubic meter.

■ **Chile.** Mr. Oyib performed additional research at a salmon farm in South America, where they had a problem with the fouling of cage netting with filamentous algae. After four weeks, it was reported that a clear difference could be seen between the control nets and the nets in the ultrasonic area, with no behavioral issues created by the ultrasound on the fish. These results support the idea that marine fouling could be inhibited using ultrasound, with an added benefit of less maintenance and use of toxic anti-fouling chemicals.

■ **United States.** Catfish farms in Mississippi have studied ultrasonic technology's effects on fish that have an "off" or "muddy" flavor caused by geosmin (a by-product of blue-green algae) in the water. In an article by Tina Casey in 2009, the USDA was working on a project that focused on reducing the "off" flavor in catfish. Normal treatment for algae in the past consisted of harmful chemicals such as copper, diuron and titanium dioxide. The 2009 study results stated that ultrasound "promised a more sustainable approach." It also found that bacteria were decreased by 60% without impacting the growth of the catfish.

by aquatic life and naturally occurring bacteria.

### Thwarting Biofilm

In addition to killing and controlling algae, ultrasonic soundwaves also emit resonant frequencies that mimic water turbulence to bacteria. Bacteria prefer slow-moving or stagnant water to form biofilm. Biofilm is the slippery coating on the inside of water tanks, basins, aquaculture netting and cages, water intake grates, rocks on the edges of ponds, streams, rivers and lots of other places.

Biofilm not only serves as a means for algae to attach and grow on a surface, but it can also cause serious health and treatment issues in public drinking water supplies. By preventing the biofilm from forming on surfaces, maintenance costs associated with having to remove biofilm and any associated algae attached to and living on it, or chemically treat it, can be greatly reduced. This also directly leads to better water-quality management in public water supply scenarios.

### Case Studies

While there have been numerous international studies from around the world showing that ultrasonic technology is effective at killing and controlling algae while, at the same time, remaining harmless to humans,

**Biofilm is the slippery coating on the inside of water tanks, basins, aquaculture netting and cages, water intake grates, rocks on the edges of ponds, streams, rivers and lots of other places.**

animals, fish, mollusks, plants, zooplankton and other aquatic life, actual users of the technology have also voiced their opinions and praises about these eco-friendly products.

For example, the historic seaside town of Cumberland Harbor and the community of Osprey Cove, located in St. Mary's, Georgia, had algae growth throughout their communities. The growth was especially unsightly, as these communities are particularly prestigious. They installed ultrasonic algae-control systems, and the results were cleaner, fresher water and a more appealing presence to homeowners and visitors.

Just to the north in Johnson City, Tennessee, algae growth was a major problem for the Sawyer's Pond homeowners association and their beautiful community water feature. The HOA board installed an ultrasonic algae-control system in December 2019 and later reported a significant improvement in the water quality. They have since been able to reduce the use of their fountain to about five hours per day. They also did not see any effect on the fish or turtles in the pond. The president of the HOA board is on record saying, "This small and non-ubiquitous device does a great job for us!"

All around the world, there are people using environmentally friendly algae-control and remediation systems



Filamentous algae growth consumes oxygen and is harmful to aquatic life.

that are effective, environmentally friendly, energy saving, and cost effective. Uses can range from fish farming to golf courses, from water holding tanks to municipal ponds, and from livestock watering basins to wastewater treatment lagoons, clarifiers and plants. As research continues, including peer studies, applications will expand to further benefit our environment. ☞

### About the Author

**Antonio Trigiani** is president and owner of Diversified Power International (DPI) LLC in Piney Flats, Tennessee, which was formed in 1997. Tony's commitment to environmental issues pushed him toward research and development of the Hydro BioScience



division, which manufactures ultrasonic algae remediation and control products. Tony and his employees work diligently researching, designing and developing these chemical free, eco-friendly, ultrasonic products. The first Hydro BioScience Quattro-DB Solar Raft was released in 2016. It is Tony's quest to provide the world with a cleaner environment that leaves no environmentally hazardous footprint. 800/334-5091; www.algaemanagement.com.

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Childhood friends search for frogs in this ecosystem pond.



Cole Frisby's children play in the pond (and a little bit of mud).

# Child's Play

Ponds aren't just for grown-ups

by **Cole Frisby,**  
FncPonds

I was lucky as a kid to grow up in the rolling hills and forests of East Texas. I spent much of my time climbing trees, rambling the back roads on my bike, picking blackberries and, yes, indulging in ponds. In fact, there was a large pond directly in my front yard. I spent hours kayaking, inspecting the shores for frogs and tadpoles, fishing and swimming. Those were the days!

It was with this nostalgic past in mind that I decided to start a business building water

features. Little did I know at the time, these structures would play a major role in the lives of my clients and my own children. Ponds inspire us. After all, Henry David Thoreau wrote an entire book about one. Ponds offer a creative space to garden, a tranquil place to meditate and a low-maintenance hobby for the waterscape connoisseur.

### Family Fun

Best of all, ponds are an excellent space for family time. Ponds provide multisensory learning opportunities, such as lessons about ecology, calming techniques, biology, ento-



Small fountains (left) add some much-needed life to small areas for young kids. Clark (right) tests out his wetsuit during the winter months. Brrr!

mology, herpetology and hydrology.

As a parent, I'm always looking for fun activities to do with my boys. Kids are naturally curious, so nature is the perfect place for them to learn. There are numerous types of ponds out there, and each is enjoyable in its own way. My kids have been around them all. They love swimming in the deeper pools. They wade across the shallow waters, inquisitive and awestruck by the nature they find there. Koi ponds are a favorite, as the fish are interactive, offering dazzling views of "swimming jewels" and teaching the responsibility of caring for a pet. Kids love to hear the Japanese myth of the Golden Dragon, a story about a persevering koi's victory and reward.

When my boys were toddlers, they were already wading in shallow ponds, examining every bit of life they could reach out and grab. These hands-on experiences provided a foundation for learning even away from the water, because it gave my wife and me a way to highly engage them with their interests. In short, pond stuff!

Pre-kindergarten standards include learning about life cycles. What better

way to teach than to talk about eggs, tadpoles, froglets and adult frogs? They can observe it happening in real life before going inside and making a life-cycle wheel on a paper plate.

You can get them started with reading by building a word wall of things you see at your pond. Add a little

**Kids are naturally curious, so nature is the perfect place for them to learn. There are numerous types of ponds out there, and each is enjoyable in its own way.**

personal flair to your pond garden by helping your kids write their names on decorative rocks. Learn about everything plants need to grow as you plant your pond's garden. The possibilities are endless!

### Advanced Learning

Older kids can enjoy learning from the pond as well. They can study Claude Monet's "Bridge Over a Pond of Lilies," a water landscape he built himself and painted many times. Set up a painting station near your own aquatic scene and try your hand at impressionism. Ponds also offer a quiet place for homework or

enjoying personal space. How thrilled would you have been as a kid to hide away from your parents and annoying siblings at the pond? (I know I was.)

Back in my hometown, there's a place called Camp Tyler, where kids go year round to participate in outdoor learning activities. One of the awesome

lessons they offer is a full-day pond excursion for third and fourth graders. Kids pop on rubber boots and wade into the water, scooping out nets full of bugs, tadpoles and fish. Kids get to analyze the pH and other chemical compositions of the pond water to determine if the habitat is healthy. They look through microscopes at macro-invertebrates and micro-organisms. They observe and classify the rich pond life while discussing how every creature plays a role in the ecology of not just the pond, but also the whole forest ecosystem.

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do this is about \$50 a student. That little pond is not only a wealth of information, but also a wealth of actual money, which goes straight back into the preserved land there. Imagine being able to offer this lesson to your kids every day — tracking the variables in the environment, talking about harmless frogs as predators in a daily observable food chain, learning about chemistry and water quality... it's worth every penny.

### Mental Balance

A hot topic these days is mindfulness, with an extra emphasis on teaching our kids to take brain breaks to decompress from a stimulation-rich world. A 2020 study in *Frontiers in Psychology*

**A pond is a perfect place to help our young ones learn to cope with daily stressors. Teach your kids to take a moment each day to sit by the pond, listen to the sounds of the water and life, breathe and relax.**

found that as little as 10 minutes spent in natural settings may provide well-being benefits.

An article in *Nuance* (“There’s a Scientific Reason Why Water is So Calming”) lists a number of research-based reasons water helps destress the human brain, suggesting that even simply stopping by a river for a few minutes a day can have huge mental benefits. A study out of Stanford University shows that after eight weeks of mindfulness training, fourth, fifth and sixth graders had documented decreases in anxiety and improvements in attention. They were less emotionally reactive and more capable of handling daily challenges and choosing their behavior.

A pond is a perfect place to help our young ones learn to cope with daily stressors. Teach your kids to take a moment each day to sit by the pond, listen to the sounds of the water and life, breathe and relax. Building this daily habit will last a lifetime and give your kids the tools they need for the future ahead. Of course, the same

Koi fish (top) add so much life to the pond, and kids love them. David (middle) acquaints himself with the tadpoles. What kid doesn't love a frog? Ruby (bottom) feeds the fish at a brand new pond.



Clark asks, "Dad, can I go swimming?"

applies to us grown-ups. Who couldn't use a little mindfulness and quietude? Happy parent, happy kid, as I say!

### Safety Training

Sometimes, clients are concerned that ponds can be a safety issue for

younger kids. I see ponds as an opportunity to teach kids about water safety. The benefits of the pond far outweigh the very low risk they may pose under the wrong conditions. When building a water structure, family members should be taken into consideration, and any needed safety measures can be installed at the time of construction.

In order to keep kids safe around ponds, discuss with them how to be safe around the pond. Build a barrier using plants or stones as a “no-go zone.” Invest in swimming safety lessons if need be. Try to access and use the pond often with your children, so they are comfortable and know how to behave in and around it.

Ponds offer so much for families. They create a culture that offers opportunities to learn, tell stories, stay active, destress and so much more. What better way to integrate the gift of nature and the outdoors into our daily lives, mere steps away from our back door! ☺

### About the Author

**Cole Frisby** is a Certified Aquascape Contractor and maintenance service expert in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. He is a husband and father to two handsome, rambunctious boys. Cole grew up behind the Pine Curtain in Bullard, Texas, where he found a passion for nature and the outdoors. He started his pond-construction business in 2008 and became Aquascape certified in 2014. Cole strives to provide outstanding quality and unique water-feature designs. His mission is, “Ponds done right. Customers served right.” [www.fncponds.com](http://www.fncponds.com).



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# Alley-oop!

## Pond maintenance for an **NBA legend**

by **John Magyar,**

Universal Aquatics

It's hard to believe that an entire year has gone by since a handful of Certified Aquascape Contractors had the privilege of building basketball Hall of Famer Shaquille O'Neal a one-of-a-kind pond and waterfall system at his home in McDonough, Georgia.



The Superman logo built into the feature screams, "Shaquille O'Neal."

Even though this beast of a project only took four days to complete, it is completely loaded with all the bells and whistles, including a 70-foot stream flowing away from the main house over monstrous boulders and under a bridge before crashing into a 22-by-50-foot Aquascape ecosystem pond. The pond was also equipped with a constructed wetland filtration system, intake bay and a gas fire pit that is actually built directly into the pond itself. The main viewing area for the pond was provided by Pete Nelson of Animal Planet's Treehouse Masters in the form of a massive

custom-designed and built treehouse.

The entire project required 85 tons of moss rock and 35 tons of river rock. The 3-foot-deep pond pushes 25,000 gallons of water per hour. Standout features of the pond include a 25-inch architectural block wall with a gas fire pit and three custom stacked-slate sphere fountains flowing into the waterfalls and stream. One of the fountains sports a Superman symbol — one of O'Neal's many monikers — to clearly distinguish the property as the Shaq family compound.

### Rookie of the Year

After the build, the system had to be tweaked just like any other newly installed feature. It had to be drained and flushed again after the initial reveal in order to remove more of that gorgeous Georgia red clay that stuck to the rocks during the installation process. We reduced the flow of the jets and in the bog from 9 PL pumps to 5 PL pumps. This was done in order to reduce evaporation rates on the system.

We continue to provide maintenance for Shaq's pond on a weekly basis. Maintenance for the system is no different than any other system we care for — there's just more of it!

### Man-to-Fish Defense

Within a few months after installation, the system started to develop an algae bloom in the waterfall, which is right on point with water features in the Atlanta area. They don't call it Hotlanta for nothing!

The 12 koi were added a month after the pond was up and running, and the algae bloom occurred a few months later in the stream section. For most of the summer last year, the algae were growing quite well in the shallow sections of the stream and waterfall sections.



Pitcher plants hug the water's edge while debris is removed from the pond.

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John Magyar, owner of Universal Aquatics in Lawrenceville, Georgia, helps perform routine maintenance for Shaquille O'Neal's pond.

When summer turned to autumn and the leaves began to fall over Shaq's water feature last year, the system performed beautifully. The majority of the leaf debris travelled to the intake bay, where it was easily collected with a net. The flow from the waterfall and the directional

spray jets guided most of the leaves where they needed to go. Some of the debris did end up in a few pockets in the pond, but it was easily collected with nets.

During the fall and winter months, most of the algae in the feature largely disappeared. Again, that's common

for ponds in the Atlanta area.

When early spring rolled around, we did see a hefty algae bloom, which is typical for essentially every feature we service. We were able to manage it with the IonGen and low amounts of algaecide.

Surprisingly, although the lotus,

## SHAQ'S CHECKLIST:

Here is a general checklist of items that are included in maintaining the Big Guy's pond:

- Algae cleaning
- Removing any debris in the pond
- Décor and rock cleaning if needed
- Adding water to compensate for any evaporation loss
- Inspecting healthiness and overall well-being of fish
- Inspecting and cleaning of all filtration areas
- Observing overall welfare of the system
- Adding beneficial bacteria and algicide when required
- Checking pumps for proper flow
- Trimming pond and stream plants
- Removing dead leaves and flowers if needed
- Checking pond and waterfall lighting system
- Checking IonGen system

umbrella plant and one waterlily did return this year, most of the others unfortunately did not.

### Future Playbook

As of now, we are only planning on adding some more aquatic plants to the feature to make up for the ones that never came back from last year. We will be adding an assortment of plants

to not only help soften the edges, but also to help with algae control.

One year later, the pond is going strong. The Universal Aquatics team is proud to have been a part of the project, and it is a joy to be able to visit and enjoy the system on a routine basis.

The first year was a success, so we'll see what year two brings! *ca*

### About the Author

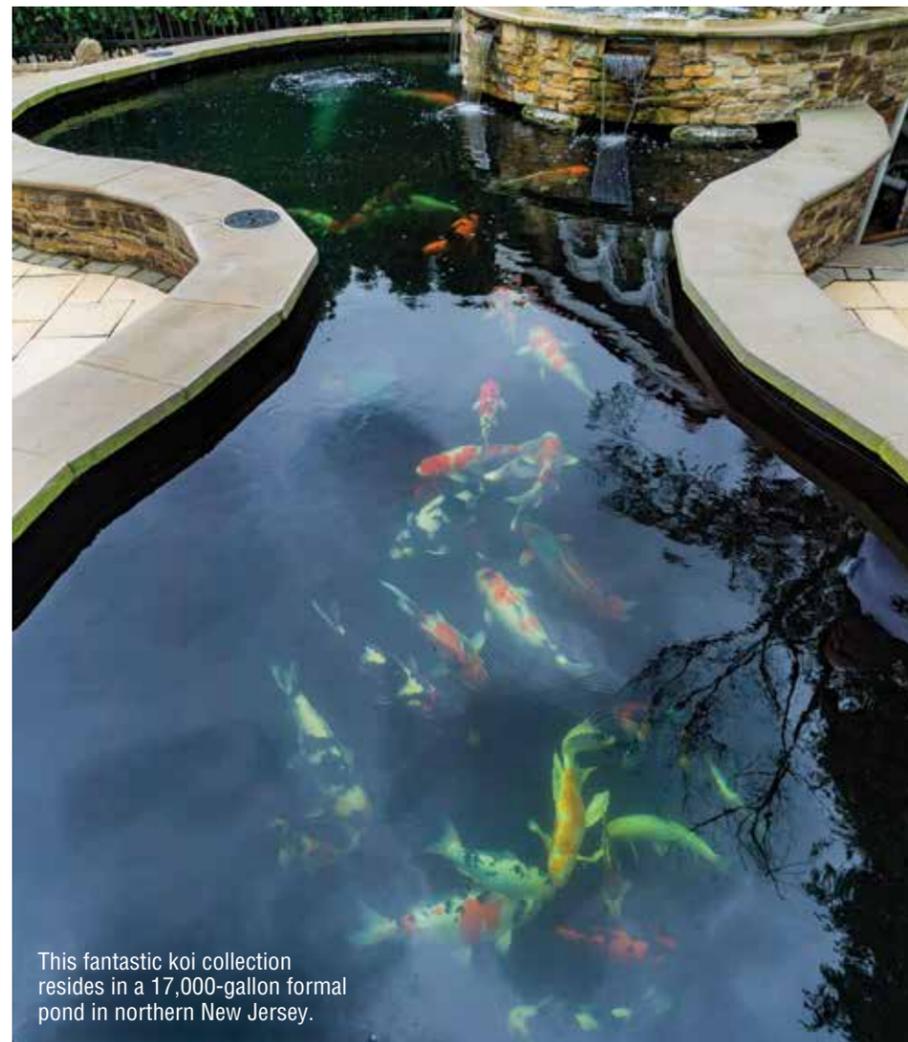
**John Magyar**, owner of Universal Aquatics LLC in Atlanta, Georgia, is a biologist with more than 15 years of experience in pond design and installation and maintenance of koi ponds, pondless waterfalls, water gardens and water fountains. His expertise stems from years of work in the zoo and public aquarium industry throughout the United States.

John has worked as a biologist at the Georgia Aquarium, the San Antonio Zoo and the Flint RiverQuarium in Albany, Georgia. Working at public aquariums gave him a chance to care for exotic animals, while developing a truly hands-on approach to designing, creating and maintaining water features.

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## Koi Pickers

Popular varieties, what their names mean & how to choose them

by **Francesco Gonnella**,  
Fitz's Fish Ponds

For koi enthusiasts, traveling to Japan, the birthplace of koi fish, is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. As koi dealers, we are spoiled and usually get to travel to Japan at least once a year. After five years of going on koi-buying trips, we have been lucky to learn from the top breeders about what to look for when picking out koi.

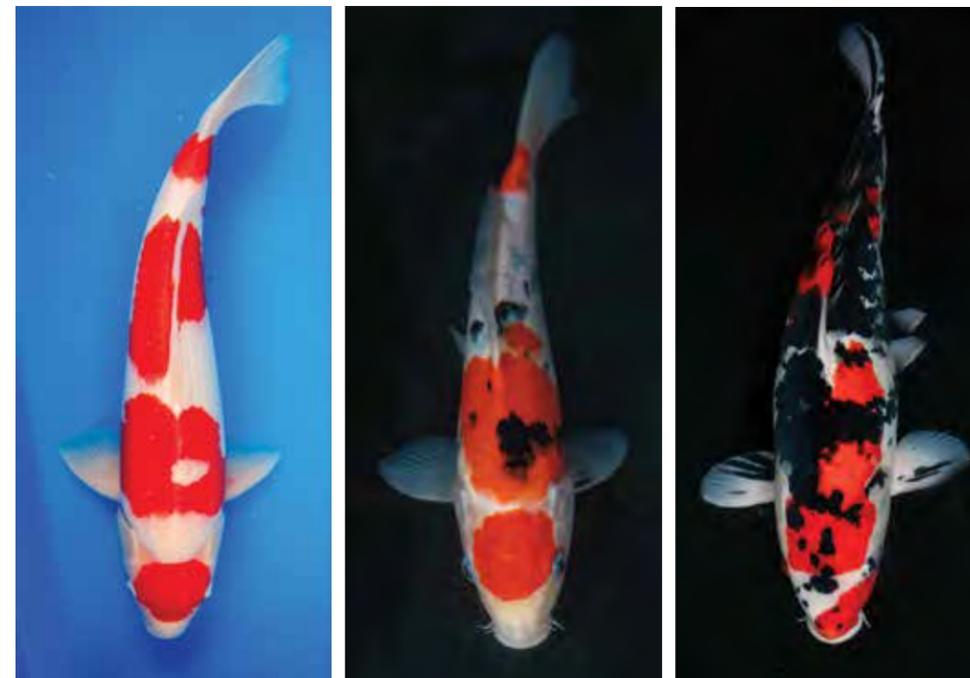
At the end of the day, the koi you should pick is the one you like the most. But frequently, customers will ask me what they should be looking for when picking out a koi from one of our tanks, so I share with them some of these general rules, depending on what variety they are interested in. In every case, I always look for their reaction as I walk them through our greenhouses, because when we walk up to a tank, there will usually be one or two koi that catch their eye immediately. More often than not, that's the fish they end up purchasing.



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The Holy Trinity of the koi world, from left to right: Kohaku, Sanke and Showa.

The Holy Trinity of the koi world is the Gosanke class: the Kohaku, Sanke and Showa.

Kohaku

“Koi appreciation starts with the Kohaku and ends with the Kohaku” – Unknown. The Kohaku, pronounced “ko-hah-ku,” is a white (Shiroji) koi with orange (Beni) patches. When picking out a Kohaku, one of the most important things to look for (besides good health, of course) is a good, clean Shiroji. When breeding koi, it’s significantly more difficult to get a pure Shiroji than it is to get a good Beni. For this reason, a Tancho Kohaku koi with a nice, bright white can cost as much as a mortgage payment on a house — and sometimes even more.

For the Beni on a Kohaku, you generally do not want the coloration to extend past the eyes — although a button nose is fine and adds personality to the koi. An interesting feature some Kohaku have is Kuchibeni, or “red lipstick.” Kuchibeni refers to Beni on the lips of the koi that resembles lipstick.

On a Kohaku, the Beni is the main focus, but you don’t want it to overwhelm the fish, because you still want to be able to appreciate the Shiroji. This is the classic pattern of a koi and is usually

found both in koi artwork and on the crowned Grand Champion of the All Japan Koi Show. Indeed, for more than 10 years, the Grand Champion has been a Kohaku or a Showa.

Showa

The Showa Sanshoku, usually shortened to Showa and pronounced “show-ah,” has a black body — although it may not necessarily look like it — with red and white markings across it. A Showa tends to have less Shiroji than Kohaku or Sanke, and its Sumi will wrap around the body, almost always present on the head, then extending past the lateral line.

Great Showa are very difficult to pick, especially as juveniles, because the Sumi tends to change unpredictably over time. Sometimes it will show up on some areas of the fish and disappear in other areas as the fish matures. A Tosai (one-year-old) Showa will look almost completely different in just a year or two. If you don’t want a Showa to change very much, it’s better to pick a mature one that is at least a Sansai (three-year-old).

Sanke

The Sanke (pronounced “sawn-kay”) is a white koi with orange patches and

black peppered throughout the body. The black spots should be on the top of the body and not extend past the lateral line. Occasionally, black stripes will be on the fins or tail.

When picking a Sanke, it is pretty similar to picking a Kohaku — you don’t want the Beni to cover too much of the face. As for the Sumi, you want it to be peppered throughout the koi as evenly as possible. There will usually be more Sumi toward the tail of the koi and no Sumi on the head.

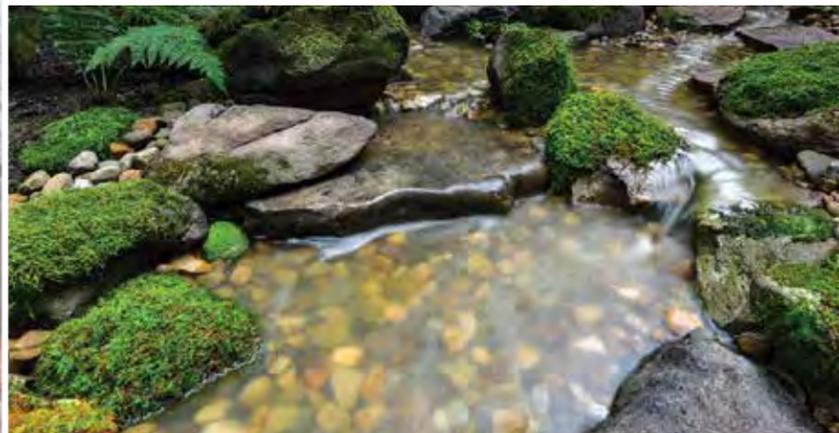
Other Varieties

A Kujaku is a metallic white koi with orange or red patches and black reticulation of the scales. It is believed to have originally been created by crossing the Goshiki with Hikari Muji in the 1960s. A very sought-after specimen is the Tancho Kujaku; a Tosai high-end example can easily go for over \$5,000. Kujaku actually means “peacock” in Japanese, and although they don’t have colors like a peacock, they have a similar essence. They have a metallic shimmer to them that resemble peacock feathers, and some have a demeanor like them, too. The way they swim around our tanks is similar to the way our male peacocks strut around the farm.

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Go to [www.pondtrademag.com/entry-form-2021-water-artisans-of-the-year-awards/](http://www.pondtrademag.com/entry-form-2021-water-artisans-of-the-year-awards/) for official rules and entry form.

**Contest deadline is  
November 30, 2021.**



This Ochiba was imported from Japanese koi breeder Yamasan.

An Ochiba Shigure ("oh-chee-buh she-goo-rah") is most often just referred to as Ochiba, which means "leaves of fall on the water." It is a blue or gray-bodied koi with a chocolate-brown or rust pattern. Ochiba koi will often have reticulation on the scales, which is also called a net pattern, like the Asagi. Doitsu Ochibas are some of the most beautiful and rare fish you can find.

### The Bottom Line

Unless you are buying very high-end koi or plan on entering them into a koi show, personal preference rules all. My favorite koi in my personal pond is a Showa from Shintaro Koi Farm that my sister picked

out and affectionately named Scarlet. I got Scarlet as an 18-inch Nisai (two-year-old), and while this fish is beautiful, it isn't going to win any awards.

Does it matter that Scarlet may not be a show winner? No. Does it matter that Scarlet is actually a male? No. What matters is that she is the first fish to greet you when you walk up to the pond, and she is so friendly that you can handfeed her. She has way too much Beni. I've seen Sanke with more black on them. Her Shiroji is a clean white, but there isn't enough of it. In any case, she is adored by my family, and because of the joy she gives them, I wouldn't trade her for any other koi. 

### About the Author



#### Francesco Gonnella

joined Fitz's Fish Ponds in 2012. As a Fish Care Specialist, he monitors the water quality in all stock tanks and performs weekly slime-coat biopsies to make sure the fish are free of parasites. He also feeds the fish multiple times a day and backwashes the filters. In his free time, Francesco enjoys taking care of his own fish, hiking, going fishing and photography.

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A floating stone bridge provides a seamless, walkable pathway over this body of water.

**POND TRADE FLASHBACK!**  
This article ran in the Jan/Feb 2017 issue, and is running again per request.

# Walk on Water

Feel at one with the pond with floating steps

by **Kent Wallace,**  
Living Water Solutions, Inc.

simply cannot. The feeling of being part of the pond is very appealing, considering the relationship most people build with their fish over time.

**SERIES:**  
Best Pond Practices  
*This is an installment of an ongoing, multi-part series. Be sure to watch for further installments in future issues!*

The floating bridge, or steppingstone look, has been popular for some time now in both formal and garden pond designs. Building them in a manner that will stay stable over time isn't actually that difficult. Floating stone bridges give an appearance of freedom that solid bridges or bridges with railings

## Concrete Ponds

Concrete ponds with a polyurea seal or other flexible seal coating are fairly easy. The swimming pool industry has been doing this for a long time now. When it comes to the support structure for the steps, the only difference between a living water feature and a pool is the shape. In a living water feature with fish, more open space between the step supports is desired for better flow and more volume.



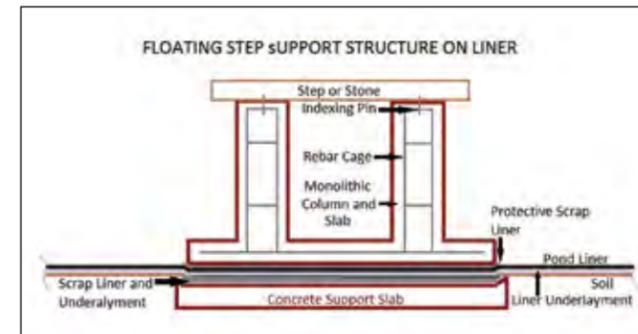
The concrete support slab is seen under the liner before (top, left) and after the installation of rebar (top, right). The concrete columns (bottom, left) are poured around rebar in Sonotube forms to create the desired look (bottom, right).

Instead of standard square support blocks, a living water feature is better served with less restrictive round pillars, allowing more room for the fish and better circulation. If a designer has specified the square supports, try to build them as narrow as possible and round the corners a little, if you can.

The blocks or pillars used as the support structure will always have rebar in them with a few inches of excess at the top. This excess should be bent over inside the steps if the steps are to be formed and poured in concrete. A No. 4 bonding wire connected to the shell

rebar is also required to pass electrical code. If stones or prefabricated steps are to be used, a short piece or two of rebar should be left protruding upward about an inch. This short piece of rebar will act as a locating pin and fit into a hole in the

bottom of the step to keep it from moving or sliding if the bonding mortar should ever delaminate. I've always used mortar fortified with Versabond as the bonding agent. Versabond is a cementitious, thin-set material with more glue in it.



## Liner Ponds

Building floating steps in a liner pond is a little more difficult. First off, you can't put liner around the pillars or seal to them in any way that would breach the liner. Secondly, it's going to be very difficult to replace the liner later on if the need arises. The pillars must be poured on top



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of the liner with the liner left unscathed below them. They cannot be individually set — all pillars must be combined or joined as one monolithic assembly. This creates a lot of weight on top of the liner, but steps can be taken to minimize the pressure per square inch and protect the liner.

Start by establishing the area to be crossed and excavate it approximately 6 inches deeper than the pond floor. Then, pour concrete back to the level of the pond floor. This lower support slab should have a simple rebar cage in it, just like you would install in any slab that is going to support some weight. Usually no form is required, because the surrounding soil is the form. The support slab should be troweled as smoothly as possible and feathered into the surrounding soil. Once cured, cover the support slab with a layer of padding or underlayment separate from the underlayment normally used for the liner. The normal underlayment is then laid out just as in any standard liner installation. A scrap section of liner is then laid over the support area, and the main pond liner is installed over it. Install the rest of the main liner as you normally would from here, with the exception of the steppingstone support structure. Lay another piece of scrap liner over the area the pillar slab is to be poured on, with the forms for the slab set on top of this piece. The excess can be carefully trimmed back to the form or slab after the form is removed. This layering adds a lot of protection, helping the main liner last longer.

Once the form is in place, set the rebar structure and pour the slab. The 10-to-12-inch

Sonotube forms are set around the rebar pillars on the lower slab and filled with concrete while the slab is wet, making the pillars and slab one monolithic structure. Level the pillars at the correct height and place a short rebar pin in the top. When using flagstone, I double the pieces, drilling the locating holes in the bottom piece. The top decorative piece is bonded to the lower piece with Versabond, hiding the holes.

The lower slab under the liner can be buried deeper with the upper slab at the pond's surface level if you desire, but many times the slope of the floor can be dealt with at the slab and feathered in as shown in the photos.

### Float on!

This is just one example of how to do this. In the past, I have created an 18-foot-long, stepped walkway in a 5-foot-deep pond with several thick stones approximately 3 by 4 feet, just inches apart. When doing multiple stones, a pattern of each stone can be made using Masonite or cardboard, with the locating holes marked in them. The patterns can be laid out on the pond floor and arranged prior to pouring the pillars, and then placed on top of the pillars over the indexing pins to ensure a proper fit when finished. When using single, larger or thicker stones, the locating holes must be drilled carefully to prevent breaking through the top side.

Eric Triplett at The Pond Digger has become an expert at the floating stone look and can also help with examples of how this can be done in different applications. Let your clients "walk on water" in some of your own designs with the floating stone look. ☞



The final "floating stone" look.



Here's the floating stone structure, complete with bridge steps.

### About the Author

**Kent Wallace** was born and raised in Las Vegas. Kent spent most of his adult life in the automobile industry at independent shops and dealerships, including his own shop as a race car fabricator at age 24. Then, in 2001 a neighbor asked Kent if he could build her a koi pond like the one Kent's father had.

From that point on, pond building became his new passion. That first pond he built was submitted to Better Homes & Gardens magazine and won Best Courtyard Nationwide in their special interest publication.

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| Pond Tour |

# "Puddle Jumping" in KC

New format expands access to water garden tours

by **Lora Lee Gelles**,  
 Publisher, POND Trade  
 Magazine



I had the pleasure of attending one of this year's six "Puddle Jumping Water Garden Tours" sponsored by the Greater Kansas City Water Garden Society.

First off, it was great to be out and about seeing pond folks again. I've been wanting to attend this water garden tour for a few years. They did something different this year. Instead of having many, many ponds to see in two days, they spread it out over six sepa-

rate Saturdays from June to September.

I set off to go to nine featured ponds in one day, and I did just that. I was really impressed with the ponds and their owners, who were happy and eager to share information.

The icing on the cake was the evening pond party at Linda Harwood's home. She has a pond to die for, and it was all lit up for nighttime viewing. There was a jazz string quartet, appetizers and adult beverages.

Glad I was able to finally check the Kansas City Water Garden Society tour off my bucket list! ☺

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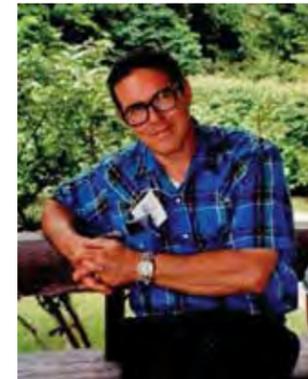
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## Trade News |

### A Tribute to Ken Landon, a Truly Unique and Multifaceted Waterlily Connoisseur

Ken Landon will be sorely missed. He passed away at his home in San Angelo, Texas, on July 15, 2021, with his much loved and faithful dog Sparky at his side. He was a kind and gentle soul who, more than anything, wanted to bring beauty into the world through the simplicity of flowers, and specifically waterlilies. As a teenager, he saw a barren backyard at his family's home and asked to build



his first pond. Ken knew he needed to add some beauty and bought his first waterlily. He went on to build and maintain the International Waterlily Collection in San Angelo that has delighted and awed visitors from around the world for the past few decades. He was a determined and avid collector of species lilies in an effort to save them for the world to see, enjoy and have available for hybridizing. He was a daring

explorer and traveled far and wide to obtain a variety of specimens for the International Waterlily Preservation Repository, which he founded and maintained. Many of his collected plants were thought to have been extinct. An artist who loved to create, his many hybrids are now worldwide. He shared material and his knowledge with hybridizers and other collections everywhere. It brought him happiness that he was able to supply the seeds that helped the country of Egypt restore *Nymphaea Caerulea*, the Sacred Lily of the Nile, to its original home.

He loved the science of it all. He wasn't satisfied with the fertilizers he found, so he created Landon's fertilizer to nurture the plants we all love. A founding member of the IWGS and a 2001 inductee into its Hall of Fame, Ken made waterlilies his life's work.

Most of all, he loved sharing his collection with the people who would stop and visit. Ken never met a stranger. He loved to talk about the flowers and hear about the joy his flowers brought into the lives of others. Upon seeing visitors while working in the pools, he would pick a flower to bring a smile to someone's face.

Ken Landon was a true genius, and his talents were not confined to the world of *Nymphaea*. Trained and educated as an engineer and teacher, he contributed to the space program and led student teams in design competitions. He had a successful cotton farming operation. Ken was a master of chemistry and pyrotechnics. There were many a Landon firework show that happened over the San Angelo skies. He loved to delight the crowds with the many colors and wizardry — they were all set off with such spectacle and flair. He mixed and built all of his own displays. Ken was so accomplished at this craft that he was asked to do the fireworks display for Ronald Reagan's presidential inauguration.

Ken was a caring and generous man who truly enjoyed helping others. He was an extremely humble man. He accomplished his mission in life, he added beauty to the world in many ways. He will be greatly missed.

## Double Deep 6 Pond Skimmer



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**EasyPro's Eco-Clear Complete Pond Filtration Systems**

EasyPro is making pond maintenance easier than ever! Their new Eco-Clear Pond Filtration Systems include the Eco-Clear Submersible Pond Pump and the Eco-Clear Pressure Filter that filters with multiple densities of foam filters and bio-media. Filters also include a high-intensity UV light for crystal-clear water. Kink-free tubing and clamps are included so you can hit the pond running! Four systems area available for ponds up to 3,900 gallons. To request your full-color catalog or for more information on EasyPro products, call 800/448-3873 or visit [www.easypro.com](http://www.easypro.com).



**Two Trade Shows in One Location**

One admission fee gives industry members access to two trade shows: GIE+EXPO and Hardscape North America. Over the course of three days, Oct. 20 – 22, landscape and hardscape professionals will gather in Louisville, Kentucky, to shop the newest products and technology, attend a wide variety of education sessions and network.

The annual trade shows bring people together from all 50 states and 40 countries to explore new products, meet vendors and like-minded peers and soak up all the knowledge they can in three action-packed days. With expanded education on real-world topics such as drones, robotics and connectivity, as well as features that put attendees behind the controls, this year's show will offer a wide range of dynamic opportunities, including a Hands-on Drone Zone, UTV Driving Experience and the HNA Installer Championships.

For more information and online registration, visit [www.gie-expo.com](http://www.gie-expo.com) or [www.hardscapena.com](http://www.hardscapena.com).



**Pond Keeping Made Easy: Automated Treatments by Aquascape**

Aquascape Inc. offers simple solutions to keep ponds clean, clear and healthy. The Aquascape Automatic Dosing System applies a choice of specially formulated water treatments to water features. It eliminates guesswork by electronically dispensing water treatments with accuracy and consistency. There are four available treatment pouches for ponds: Maintain, Clean, Clear and Protect. Each treatment is designed to tackle a wide variety of issues, including cloudy water, bad odors and decaying debris. Pond owners program the system based on their water feature's size using the control panel. The Automatic Dosing System is also available for decorative fountains and offers two treatment pouch options: Prevent and Clean.

"Pond owners can run into an array of water-quality issues during the summer. With the Automatic Dosing System, you can set it and forget it, rather than manually adding treatments on a weekly basis," says Dave Kelly, vice president of product development for Aquascape Inc. "The system can be mounted vertically to a post or partially buried in the ground for a hassle-free installation."

For more information about Aquascape and our full line of water-feature products, visit [www.aquascapeinc.com](http://www.aquascapeinc.com) or call 866/877-6637 (U.S.) or 866/766-3426 (Canada).



**OASE Professional Fountain Nozzles**

Introducing OASE Professional Fountain Nozzles! Professional Fountain Nozzles direct water in decorative patterns or shapes in larger fountain applications. Made of high-quality brass and stainless steel, these commercial-grade nozzles all perform well in fresh water, and select nozzles are capable of being used in non-freshwater applications, such as pool and sea water. Choose from a variety of decorative nozzle patterns, such as rotating dancing nozzles (Rotating Nozzle), foaming and frothing (Cascade & Schaumsprudler Nozzles), cylindrical geysers (Geyser Nozzle) and more multi-stream nozzles to create beautiful and entertaining water features!

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**Get Set for the St. Louis Koi Show & Pond Expo**

The Gateway Koi and Pond Club will host the 19th Annual Northern Midwest ZNA Koi Show & Pond Expo on Sep. 24 – 26, 2021. The event will be held at Timberwinds Nursery in Ellisville, Missouri, and is open to the public with free admission. Hours are Friday 3 – 5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. There will be raffles, attendance prizes, koi judging and speakers on various topics of ponding and gardening Saturday, along with the judges' talk and tour of the tanks on Sunday. Koi, goldfish and pond and garden-related vendors will be open all three days. Timberwinds Nursery carries a variety of high-quality plants, shrubs and trees with decorative garden and gift items.

For the show schedule, visit [www.nmzna.net](http://www.nmzna.net) and [www.gatewaykoiandpondclub.org](http://www.gatewaykoiandpondclub.org). Come enjoy the beautiful living jewels of Japan! Fun for the whole family! Outdoor event, rain or shine! For more information, call 314/276-9461.



**Blue Thumb Introduces the Heiho Fountain**

The Heiho basalt fountain provides a simple way to add interest to your landscape, with its smooth sides and flat surface surrounding a small fountain spectacle. Situated in the corner of a paver patio, the smooth pooling of water is a calm display of serenity that precludes the cascading of the element to the space below. The kit comes complete with the molded basin and everything you need for professional installation. Stand out by offering professional-grade fountains from Blue Thumb.

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**Water Artisans of the Year Contest is Underway!**

POND Trade magazine is pleased to announce that its sixth annual contest is open for submissions as of Sep. 1, 2021.

There are five categories this year, with one new category (Rock Artisan) that is quite exciting. This year's five categories are:



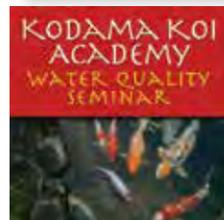
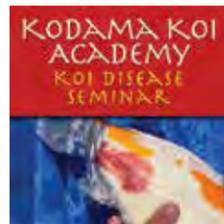
- Most Naturalistic
- Best Under \$15k
- Formal Ponds and Fountains
- Pondless Feature
- Rock Artisan **NEW!**

The contest opens Sep. 1. For official rules and entry form, go to <https://bit.ly/2021artisans/>.

**Kodama Koi Academy Releases Online Seminar Videos about Varieties, Koi Food, Water Quality, Breeders and Koi Diseases**

Taro and Mamoru Kodama have released a new series of online educational seminars developed as an English resource for all koi lovers across the world.

Each hour-long presentation is designed to cover important topics for koi hobbyists to master along their journey in koi and pond management. Originally, this type of information was only available in person or in book format, but it is now available online from Kodama, with both free and paid video content. You can view all Kodama Koi Academy videos at [www.kodamakoifarm.com/shop/koi-academy/](http://www.kodamakoifarm.com/shop/koi-academy/).



Kodama Koi Academy is designed to mimic the previous in-person events, and it is free of charge if you attend the live webinar. The edited recording is then posted for purchase after the seminar.

At the time of this release, Koi Academy had released nine videos, with six weeks focusing on different varieties and three weeks of educational seminars on the topics of Koi Food, Water Quality and Koi Diseases.

The academy will continue to release new paid and free content for hobbyists throughout the year, so people can improve their koi knowledge from anywhere in the world. Each Koi Academy video is sold for \$10 and can be streamed through the Kodama website.

Mamoru Kodama started Kodama Koi Academy with three important guides to help hobbyists. These books are available at [www.kodamakoisupply.com](http://www.kodamakoisupply.com) for more in-depth learning: Kokugyo 1, Kokugyo 2 and Kokugyo 3.

Taro Kodama has also recorded and released seven Koi Talk videos, which include an hour-long interview and presentation featuring top Japanese koi breeders. Koi Talk recordings are available for free on their website: [www.kodamakoifarm.com/blog/koi-talk/](http://www.kodamakoifarm.com/blog/koi-talk/).

More free educational content by the company has been organized and listed in the Kodama Koi Farm koi articles.

Kodama Koi Farm's goal is to use the knowledge gained over the past 50 years to educate koi hobbyists and dealers on how to become better koi buyers and how to take better care of their koi. We also spread the joy of koi keeping through education and helping the koi-keeping community grow. Contact [info@kodamakoifarm.com](mailto:info@kodamakoifarm.com) for questions and support.

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# FINAL THOUGHT...

Chippy Taking a Sippy



Photo courtesy of Dan Put, Put's Ponds



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